



**EVOLUTION OF PROCESS**

# EVOLUTION OF PROCESS



## PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

One of the California Society of Printmakers' (CSP) missions is to be inclusive and to create a strong printmaking community by casting a wide net to reach a greater audience. This year's journal is a good example of how CSP is not just for Californians. The Journal Committee solicited articles worldwide with submissions from across the U.S., Canada, and Europe. It's refreshing to tap into an international perspective and voice.

I'd like to welcome this year's new CSP members. Their names appear on page 39. Our online portfolio submission process ([caprintmakers.org/join](http://caprintmakers.org/join)) continues to attract more applicants from outside of the immediate San Francisco Bay Area. In our efforts to continue to increase membership diversity as well as inclusivity, we have introduced a student membership category. We are in the process of notifying academic printmaking programs throughout the country to encourage student involvement.

The Exhibition Committee is working on new venues for shows. We have secured an ongoing venue for our Annual Member's Exhibit at the Piedmont Art Center, which will host our 2017 exhibition in September. In 2018 we will celebrate a "Thinking Out of the Box" exhibition at the New Museum Los Gatos, juried by Cathy Kimball. Stay tuned for more exhibition opportunities.

In gratitude, I would like to thank our board members for their commitment and dedication to keep CSP vital and growing. We can always use extra help. If you would like to volunteer or become a board member please let us know.

Wishing you all the best prints!

Luz Marina Ruiz  
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## CSP 2018 JOURNAL

About the next journal...

The topic will be *The New Print: Marriage of Technology and Tradition*.

We invite submissions based on the guidelines which can be found on the CSP website. Please spread the word!



## 2016–2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## EDITORIAL STATEMENT

In organizing this year's journal, we chose the topic of Evolution of Process. We were interested in the evolution of ideas and the circuitous route that artists take in achieving their goals. This included both personal thoughts and creative blocks that occurred en route. In looking at process, our interest was not only in the methods and materials, but the work's connection to social or political trends.

The submissions came from all over the world and some were written in the artist's second language. Despite that, some common themes developed—that the tools used and one's subjective experience both influence the artist in the process of making art and also change the way the art develops.

At times, it was the exploration of the process that influenced the way the artist developed their own visions (Boller, Evaul, Keller, McGovern, Ritchie). Alternatively, it was the message that the artists received after interacting with the environment that shaped their work (Angel, Chamberlain, Lefebvre). For others, it was the exploration of social context (Carlsen, Furbush) or psychology (Graham) that influenced their work.

The work we reviewed didn't represent an artist's fixed idea from beginning to end, but reflected how the artist interacted with the work, the process, and the physical, psychological or social environment that transformed the work into a unique vision.

We also want to give special thanks to all of the proofreading volunteers: Sue Howe, Pamela Takigawa, Frank Trueba, Janis O'Driscoll, Jane Gregorius, and Eva Bernstein.

Editorial team  
Jan Cook  
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## TRACING THE ARC OF CREATIVE PURSUIT—THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE WHITE-LINE COLOR WOODCUT

By William Evaul

Humans made impressions from carved woodblocks for over 5,000 years, first into wet clay, then with inks on wood, fabric or skins. This continued for about 3,000 years before the invention of paper around 101 AD. In Europe, it wasn't until the late 14<sup>th</sup> century that images from printing became appreciated for their artistic value alone. Once artists were freed to use the medium to express their own voice instead of printing to serve religious or business purposes, the discoveries and technical developments flowed.

It's been a mad rush ever since. With advancements in chemistry and mechanics and the development of better materials and techniques, it might seem a bit retrograde to look for discoveries in woodcut, the most primitive and low tech of all. Nevertheless, in 1915 a Swedish American artist, Bror Julius Olssen Nordfeldt, made a unique contribution by devising a method of producing a full-color palette print from a single carved block. First known as the *Provincetown Print*, it is now better known as the *white-line color woodcut*.

If it had been left to Nordfeldt alone, the technique might have melted into art history or never even happened at all. As it was, in America in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century many artists went to Europe to study with the great masters. Painting was everything but some artists also had interests in

printmaking. When six of them reunited in Provincetown (1914) after fleeing Paris before the Great War (WWI), they decided to form a group and dedicate themselves to working in woodcut for the winter.

Ada Gilmore, her partner Mildred "Dolly" McMillan, Ethel Mars and her partner Maud Squire along with Juliette Nichols and Bror Julius Olssen Nordfeldt—all friends from Paris—rented apartments and rooms near one another, pooled their knowledge and established a safe and creative space. They could work in complete freedom of expression without the onus of competition present with the predominantly male oil painters. Also, it was a perfect medium for the expression of the modernist sensibility without challenging the prevailing styles. The atmosphere of mutual support and encouragement was enough to lead Nordfeldt to his innovation.

Nordfeldt had previously mastered the Japanese Moku Hanga technique and drew on that experience to devise a wholly new approach. Utilizing only white-line carving, fixing the paper directly to the block, creating a hinge for registration and by many repeated applications of watercolor paint and hand pressings, a unique, full-color impression was created. Subsequent prints could repeat the same color scheme with the variations reflecting the hand application, but also completely different color schemes could be employed to create other unique prints. This group expanded from six to many dozens of artists who, as *The Provincetown Printers*, organized their own gallery and traveling exhibitions. They flourished for about ten years until nearly fading away, save for one artist, Blanche Lazzell, who continued producing prints until her death in 1956.





In 1979, on assignment for *Print Review* magazine of Pratt Graphic Center, I discovered the history of this group of artists. My dear friend, the painter Myron Stout, as a young painter in Provincetown in the 50s, had known some of the group. He pointed me in the right direction and with some basic research, I wrote a short history of the origins of *The Provincetown Print* as it was known. I filed the story and went back to my painting and lithography. When Mark St. Pierre, Chair of Printmaking at the Swain School of Design caught wind of my article, he asked me to give a talk to his printmaking graduate students. After accepting his invitation, I realized that I couldn't walk into a room of printmakers to tell them about a technique I hadn't tried, so my experimentation began quickly.

After an exciting and animated residency at Swain, I saw the possibilities of this new medium. Without living practitioners available, I had to develop my own curriculum of discovery and learning. Over the course of two or three years, I took apart the various elements of the process and experimented with as many iterations as possible. I needed to learn about the carving techniques, the choices of wood, the variety of paper and the vocabulary of paint applications. During this discovery process, I purposely avoided too much personal and artistic expression in order to concentrate on the basic elements. When I felt I had a reasonable mastery of the technique, I produced my thesis print, *Amis des Vins*, 1984, a typical still life with wine bottle executed in the synthetic cubist style perfected by Blanche Lazzell. I used a clear piece of white pine, a nice heavy piece of Kochi (handmade Japanese paper) and printed my image in strong modernist colors. Since a black

border around the image was typical of the early artists, I utilized that motif—but, to signify my entry to the next level, I designed the ribbon form to pierce and then poke through that boundary. Now, I had permission to bring myself to the process.

While bringing my own sensibility to my imagery, I set out to see what contributions I could make. I began with the carved white line itself. Predominantly, the white line was a border around areas of color—a framework not unlike the lead in stained glass. So, I designed an image that utilized multiple white lines that were not borders at all, but positive elements of the image in themselves, and have continued to use the white lines as positive elements in many images since.

Watercolor paint was the medium for the early artists and generally was applied in one layer of color with occasional over printed layers and some limited monotype brush markings. Here I began developing more complex glazing and scumbling of color on color. The image surfaces treated in this manner take on a look more akin to painting than printmaking.

The wood for carving used by the first printers was Eastern White Pine. The lines were carved with a straight blade Japanese knife, making two cuts for a “V” groove. The soft pinewood was readily available and probably free as cut-off scrap from the local carpenters and lumberyard. It works just fine for most applications but does have a tendency to tear out on curves or cross cutting and the knife can run with the grain and go off line. I experimented with a variety of woods to analyze their carving properties, the





presence or lack of grain texture upon printing and how they respond to accepting the watercolor paint for printing. Taking a cue from the Japanese who used mostly Cherry wood, I found it superior to Pine. Although classified a hardwood, with sharp tools, cherry is not difficult to carve and can provide very fine lines, clean curves and close work that doesn't chip out. It also accepts and gives back the hand applied watercolor paint in a crisp, clean way. Cherry can be expensive and difficult to obtain, but fortunately I have found that Birch and Poplar both have similar working characteristics to Cherry and are more readily available and economical. Birch has the added bonus of being available in 48" x 96" cabinetmakers' grade veneer plywood. Since this relief print process relies only on the surface, the size restriction of solid wood planks is lifted. This enabled another breakthrough in the white-line woodcut process—scale.

I've always tended to work on a large scale where I can swing a brush or draw gestures and lines with full arm and body movement. When I worked for Tamarind Master Printer Judith Solodkin at Solo Press in New York City, we often produced lithographs up to six feet. These experiences encouraged me to scale up *The Provincetown Print* as it had never been done before. Plywood enabled me to carve large blocks and the problem then became finding large paper. This was difficult, but not impossible. While I was able to find large sheets of Japanese paper, I also realized that the qualities of the Japanese paper (heavy weight with little or no sizing) were important only when printing with watercolor. This led to the next breakthrough: oil based ink.

Printing with oil inks was liberating in some ways. Of course the drying time is much longer than watercolor so I thought I would be able to breeze through the printing. But, the reality is that, while the ink may not be dry, the surface sets up quickly and therefore, due to the relatively light pressure of hand rubbing, must be printed quickly as well. It was not a "short cut" but it did offer maybe 8–10 minutes of "open" time as opposed to 30–40 seconds for watercolor. Also, the character of the ink; the way it lays on the paper and the way it can be built up in layers of glaze and scumbling offered a new and interesting vocabulary. It differs from the unique vocabulary of textures and appearance of watercolor, so it is not a replacement but an additional medium of expression.

Using oil-based materials suggested another breakthrough: printing on canvas instead of paper. Now the work takes on a completely different look. The canvas requires more hand pressure and is more difficult to print. But the result is stunning and presents itself as more like an oil painting. The textures that can be obtained are unique to this method and oils allow for a wide variety of nuance with glazes and overprinting. Canvas is pinned to the block just like the paper and when complete, is stretched and framed as an oil painting.

Genre scenes, still life and landscapes seemed to satisfy the early artist so I branched out in different directions. As a figurative expressionist painter, I developed images with lots of figures and a wider scope of subjects, especially musicians who provide endless compositions with multiple





figures. With great respect for the artists who pioneered this technique, I began a series of portraits in tribute to them. Currently, there are 12 images in the *Homage to the Provincetown Printers* series, with the recent addition of Edith Lake Wilkinson, the subject of the HBO documentary *Packed in a Trunk* where I make the first print on camera. Another tribute series, *Homage to the Provincetown Players* includes Tennessee Williams, Susan Glaspell, Eugene O'Neill, Jig Cook.

Despite all that I've done pushing the medium, I still feel the possibilities are endless. I have begun planning to adapt this technique to printing with a press and a few other extensions as well. Also, I continue to teach both privately in my studio and in workshops worldwide to promote not only the medium of white-line color woodcut but to continue the spirit of collaboration and mutual support.

### Artist Information

William Evaul is a painter and printmaker who has maintained his studio in Provincetown, Cape Cod since arriving as the youngest Fellowship Grantee at the Fine Arts Work Center residency program in 1970. His affinity for art history and his respect for those who made the history led to his adoption of the white-line woodcut process.

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### Image Documentation

*Edna Hopkins at Work*, 2016, Block carved 1994, white-line color woodblock, 16.5" x 13", photo by James Zimmerman

Bill Evaul with *175 Fifth Ave.* (The Flatiron building), 2012, block carved 1995, white-line color woodblock, 70" x 34", photo by Skipper

*Amisdes Vin*, 2008, block carved 1984, white-line color woodblock, 10.75" x 8", photo by James Zimmerman

*Portrait of Blanche Lazzell*, 2016, block carved 1985, white-line color woodblock, 21.5" x 17", photo by James Zimmerman

*Nord* (Portrait of B.J.O. Nordfeldt), 1990, white-line color woodblock, 15.5" x 13"

*Portrait of Ada Gilmore*, 1992, white-line color woodblock, 17" x 13"

*New York: Night*, 2005, block carved 1994, white-line color woodblock, 36" x 72"



## ECHOES FROM THE PAST

By Ian Chamberlain

I am a printmaker who has been passionate about, and specialising in etching (intaglio) for several years. My work refers to an ongoing interest in man-made technological forms of industrial structures. Examples of this interest are bridges such as the scientific radio telescopes at Goonhilly Satellite Earth Station, or ex-military structures such as the Acoustic sound mirrors in the UK.

Etching, a traditional, historic process that has not fundamentally changed in the last 500 years, is certainly not regarded as *cutting edge*. The majority of the subjects I record were considered at the forefront of technology during their lifetime. Some of the subjects represented are now defunct or have been reconfigured for different uses. The subject matter therefore is echoed in the process used to record it. The etching process enables me to make a sustained enquiry into the subject's structure, location and the effects of time passing. It becomes my own visual experience and a graphic equivalent to an observed moment in time. I use etching to explore my subject matter as a natural extension of my drawing practice. The process offers me a diversity of mark making and a depth of tone that can capture the form, volume and surface qualities of these objects. These, I feel, are the unique qualities etching offers to enhance my creative language.

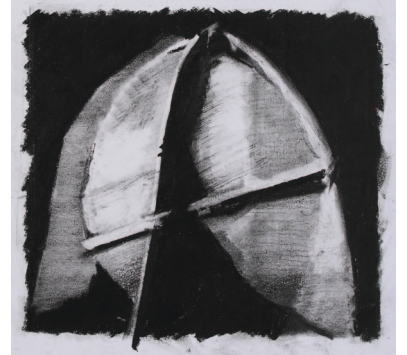
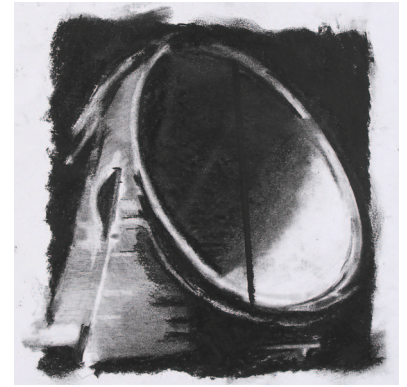
There is a long history of established artists utilizing intaglio processes, including Goya, Blake, Durer, Picasso, Chagall, and Turner. I am inspired by the artists Rembrandt and Piranesi. Rembrandt, for the dramatic

quality of his etchings, and Piranesi's architecturally inspired graphic works. These are sources that I turn to, repeatedly, since my first introduction to printmaking.

The work of Rembrandt has inspired me in many ways. His work is similar to Piranesi's in his dramatic use of light and dark to convey a sense of drama within an image. For me, his main influence is his expressive power of representation. It's the individuality of his physical mark making combined with the selective use of overwiping and underwiping the etching plate to create a graphic depth that has such a strong emotive sensibility.

Rembrandt's printmaking spread his reputation and demonstrated his prolific drawing talent, and large editions of his artworks were printed to feed a growing public demand that, in turn, promoted his paintings. There was, however, a specific use of etching that he held as equal in status to his painting. He embraced the *chiaroscuro* method, using the technique to create inspirational effects of light and atmosphere. For me, there is no finer example of this than *The Three Crosses* (1660–1661). This series of prints clearly shows how the plate has been continually adjusted and edited, using various wiping techniques to find new areas of detail and interest to enhance the narrative of the work. His energetic and expressive use of drypoint, in selectively strengthening particular lines, adds another layer of drama, urgency and intensity to this scene which could not have been produced with any other printmaking process. Rembrandt's working practice shows us his sense of play and risk taking with etching. The images become resolved through the mark making process, experimentation, testing and bold decision making.





This responsive and intuitive use of the medium can be hard to maintain through the many laborious stages of the process, and I continually look back at his work to help push my own use of the process for a greater understanding of my own subject matter and the role of printmaking within it.

Piranesi combined the role of artist with that of archaeologist, aiming to discover and preserve the memory of these ancient ruins. Originally trained as an architect, Piranesi was able to visually restore missing sections of monuments to their original glory. He used etching to witness locations around him, as if he were a wanderer among the ruins in Rome. Etching offered him an ideal means of exploring and recording place. He referred to his use of the process as *speaking evidence*, utilising his exceptional powers of observation to bring these architectural ruins to life through bold contrasts of light and darkness, revealing the unknown through his romantic vision. This notion of preservation and conservation has driven me to consider my work as a graphic historical record, constantly trying to retain a visual memory.

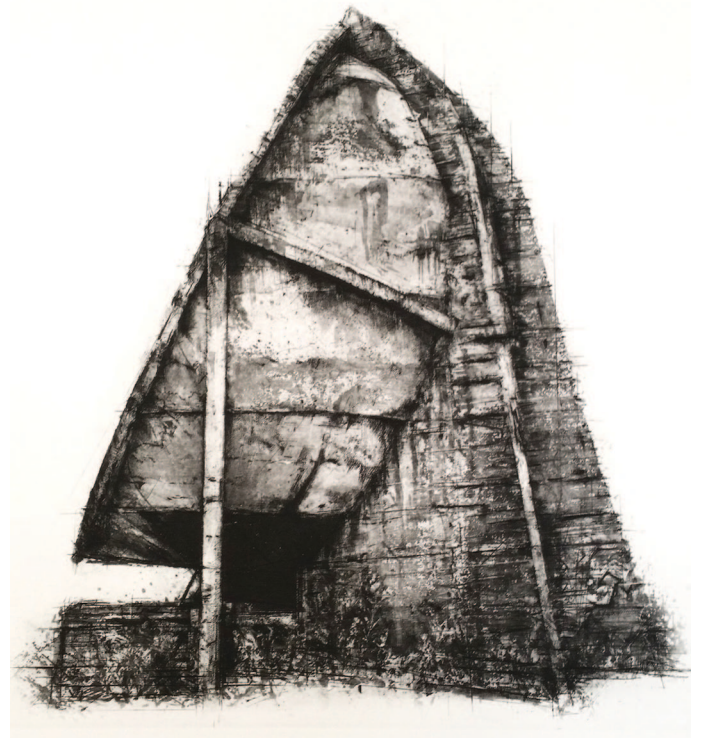
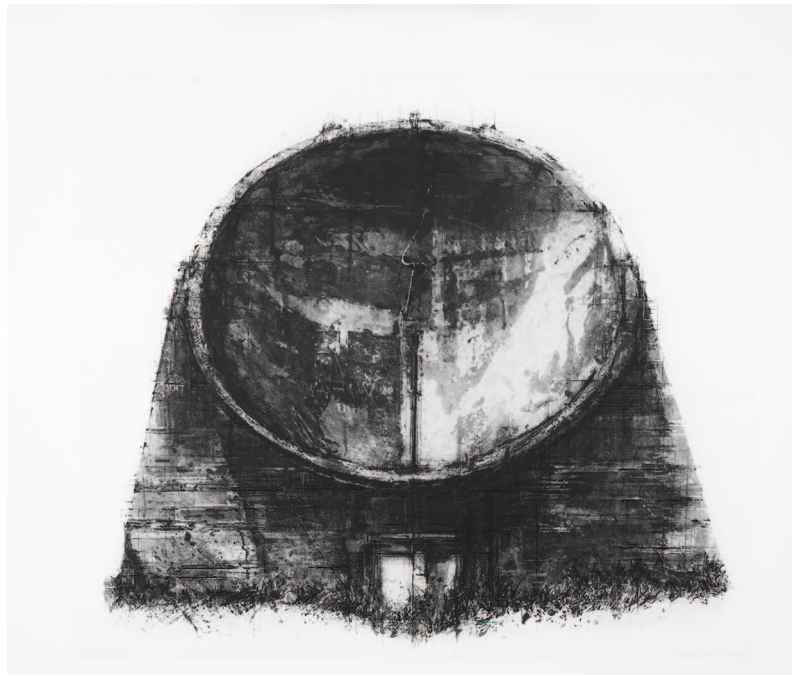
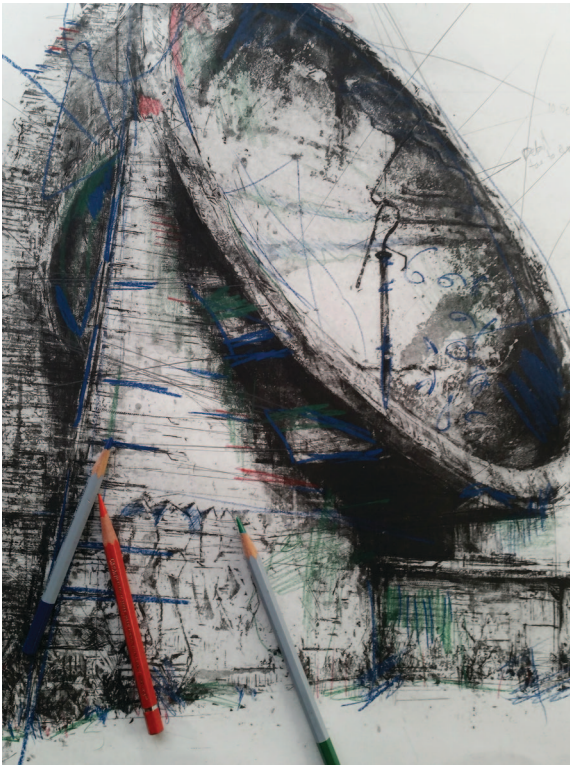
The skills and lessons learned within his commercial practice crossed over in Piranesi's *Carceri d'invenzione—Prison Series* (1720–1778). These imaginary structures were influenced by apparitions and hallucinations induced by a strong fever and lack of sleep. These epic labyrinthian scenes were dramatic in scale, Piranesi's incredible architectural ideas revealed through a series of etched drawings. The sense of theatre and grandeur in these works have influenced many artists and designers who aim to convey both poetic menace and the idea of monumental scale.

The *Carceri d'invenzione—Prison Series* was printed in two states with a fifteen-year gap due to the lack of commercial interest in the first state. Piranesi revisited the suite of fourteen prints and added two new plates. The first state had a looser, sketch-like quality but the second state and new plates were stronger and more forceful, with greater tonal depth. Piranesi's pause and reflection gave me the insight to question for myself when a plate is finished and how far it can be pushed until fully resolved. This continual evolution of the image is why I am drawn to etching, to gain a different insight into, and understanding of what it is I am recording. Thanks to Piranesi's approach, the reworking and building up of layers of information is now ingrained within my own etching methodology.

After studying Piranesi, my own interests and subject matter became clearer. I began to record locations that had long been of interest, such as the Maunsell Sea Forts in the Thames Estuary, and old acoustic sound mirrors, at Kent in the UK. The technologies used to build these structures had been superseded, made redundant, or reinvented. The role of my printmaking here was to help me visualise my interaction and connection with these monuments in order to create my own visual historical document.

I begin each project with an intense enquiry through on-site observation and drawing. Through visiting these locations I can develop my own subjective emotional response. This, combined with factual research and first-hand experience creates a sense of place. The subject itself is then removed from its surroundings and the familiar. The structures are shown devoid of the human figure so that architectural scale cannot be based on the physical





measurements of the human body. This ambiguity adds to the sense of the monumental and projects an icon feeling.

I begin by finding my way around the subject, evaluating the form through the use of light and dark in quick charcoal studies. These are then taken into the studio where, if required, more sustained studies incorporating finer lines are made. The continuation of the drawing element is an integral part of my process. This can be seen in the drawings within the continually changing etching development as new elements are brought into focus and others pushed back. The etching reveals evidence of the recording and decision-making taking place. Etching offers a unique means of working—inherent in its makeup is the intervention upon the surface and the sculptural physicality of the process; layering and building-up information through cyclical reapplications of grounds, drawing, etching, burnishing and drypoint.

My aim is to draw the viewer in, highlighting new layers of information and revealing finer levels of detail. For this, a wide range of tones and surface qualities are combined with a strong graphic line quality through etching and related intaglio processes including hard ground, aquatint, sugarlift, spit bite, drypoint and burnishing.

The physical and emotional commitment to working on a large plate is also essential. There is an intense level of reworking required to build up the layers of information and detail, the original drawings and studies become more evident due to this constant revaluation. I also use a Dremel tool to add elements of the industrial and unknown. As it can never be fully under control, the marks the drill

produces and the energy it has and gives to the work can reveal exciting results. I have learnt to embrace this element of chance and include it as part of my working process.

The effect of working at distance, away from the original source of inspiration is a protracted but flexible experience. The passing of time influences what we remember about the places we visit. There becomes a fine balance in the work—between the spontaneity and immediacy of the original drawn marks and sketches and the lengthier, methodical approach of the printmaking process.

This geographical and emotional distance allows abstract





ideas to surface and become more relevant, creating an autonomy and uniqueness that creates the potential for expression found within the intaglio printmaking process. Working from a distance also creates a dialogue between the original drawing and the print matrix, the mark making and chemical interaction of the etching process stimulating and pushing my work forwards. Etching offers a freshness and originality to my work, taking it away from mere

direct representation of subject matter to embrace and accept the idea of the artwork as evolving and shifting throughout its creation.

My prints are not just an architectural study, they are evidence of my observation and responses to a subject in a meaningful way. This is what etching allows me to do—to investigate place through an organic evolution of recording and insights into location through the interlinking processes of drawing and printmaking.

### Artist Information

Ian Chamberlain is a Senior Lecturer at the University of the West of England, Bristol, where he teaches the MA Printmaking course and BA (Hons) Drawing and Print course.

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### Image Documentation

*Work in Process 1*, working from studies to inform the latest proof, 2016, photo by Ian Chamberlain

*Work in Process 2*, preparing to burnish the plates referring back to the previous proofs, 2016, photo by Ian Chamberlain

*Study I*, 2016, charcoal, 13 x 12 cm

*Study II*, 2016, charcoal, 13 x 12 cm

*Work in Process 3*, coloured shorthand system being used to highlight areas on the proof to burnish, aquatint and add more detail, photo by artist

*Mirror II*, 2015, etching, 70 x 65 cm

*Mirror IV*, 2016, etching, 70 x 65 cm

Acoustic sound mirrors, Denge, Kent, UK, photo by Ian Chamberlain



## TRUSTING THE PROCESS: MAKING ETCHING IMAGES AS POETIC LABORATORIES WITH SAFER PRINTMAKING

By John Graham

Printmaking possesses unique qualities of graphic aesthetics and has a very special place in the visual arts. As much as printmaking has been loved for its traditional methods, its adaptability in multi-media has no limitations. All print media are intricately interconnected with other artistic media and multimedia art projects have endless possibilities. Contemporary print media processes absorb the qualities of painting, drawing, photography and sculpture. Printmaking may also extend itself outward to other artistic media because of its versatility, limitless scale, democratic nature, and its quality as a multiple. Art-making in a shared printmaking studio also amplifies the communal aspect of a printmaker in society. Like many visual artists worldwide, my environmental concerns have become increasingly enmeshed with health and safety awareness. I, and many like-minded print media practitioners, have questioned our past traditional training. Many of us are responding creatively to the important choices in reconciling cultural and educational needs with environmental sustainability. I am most happy to report that we are making many ongoing advances in the printmaking studio at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, Canada. In the last three years, we have created a far healthier collective working environment.

The development of safer printmaking technical and creative research is motivated by a growing awareness that working in shared artistic working environments has obvious cumulative health risks. By detoxing our studio, we encourage healthier practices of art-making and also demonstrate a conscientious stewardship of the environment.

Much progress has been made in many printmaking studios worldwide to promote health and safety, environmental sustainability and responsibility. But many print artists continue to value artistic results over health concerns. Often many are skeptical, unaware, confused, and disagree about the effectiveness of newer and safer printmaking methods. They default to toxic traditional methods because they know that they work. In response to this challenge, we are currently developing an inspiring website that will promote safer printmaking as a best practice, identify best product information, and champion environmentally responsible art-making. All of my recent etching images were created with safer printmaking materials and methods. This included BIG (Baldwin Intaglio Ground) resist. The main constituent of this etching ground is vegetable oil based ink, and the rest of the ingredients are edible-based products. The areas of tone were created with airbrush aquatint with acrylic inks. Each image was etched in a ferric chloride etching mordant. The grounds were removed with Citrasolve.

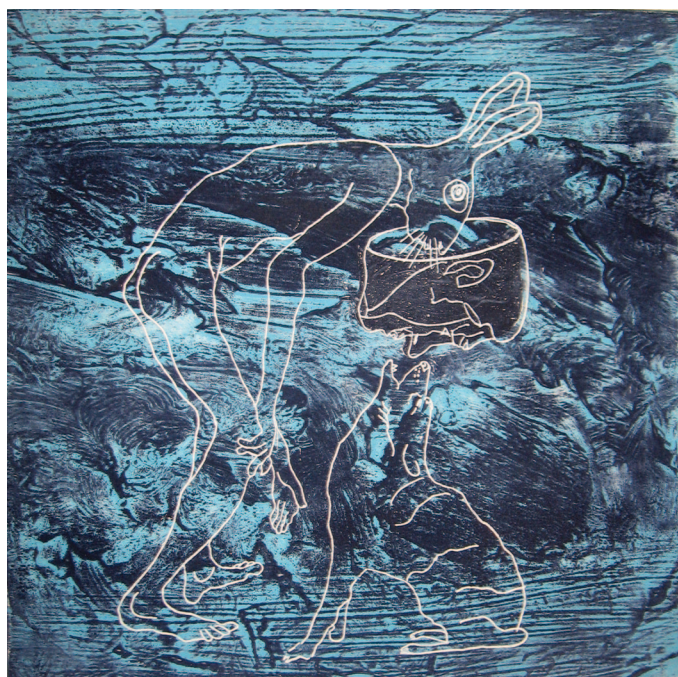
Safer printmaking can be both a pioneer of more ecological technologies and artistic new meanings. By being aware that health risks in my own art-making processes have





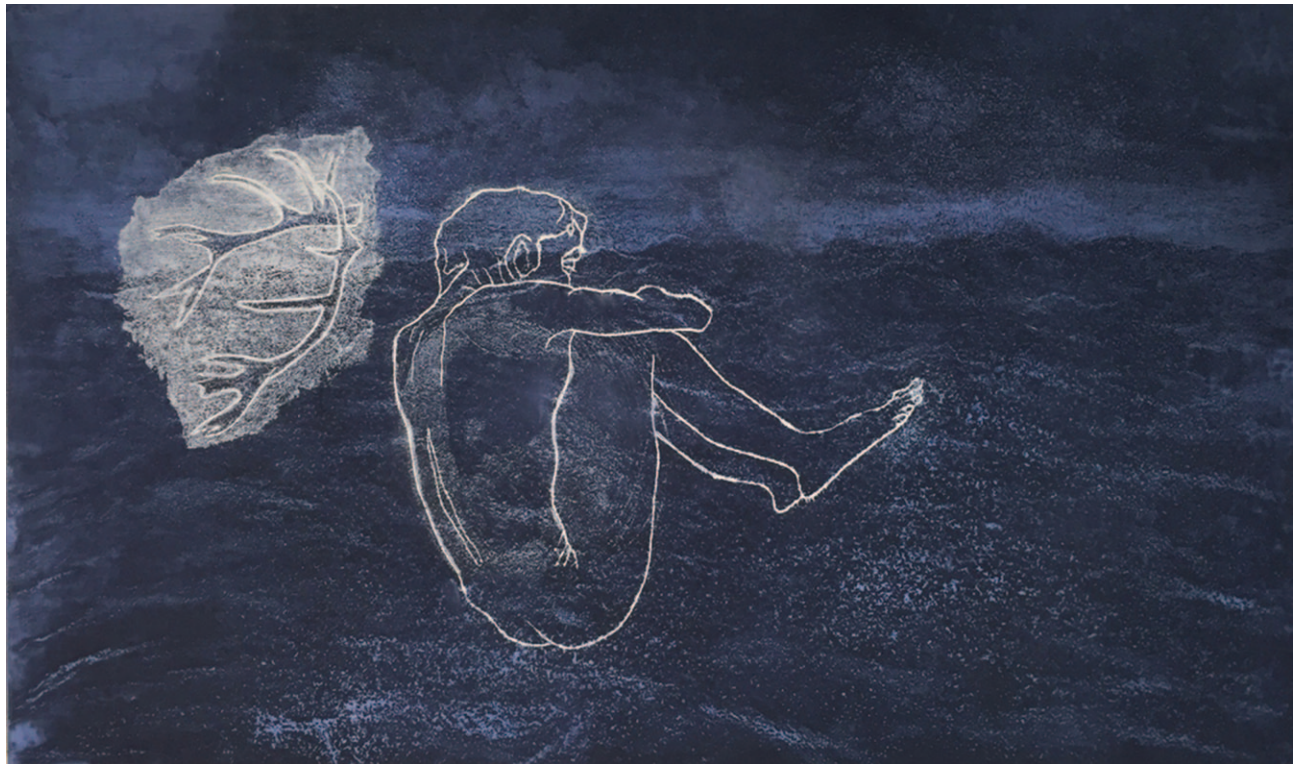
been minimized, I can now fully trust the process. This completely frees up the evolution of my idea and image-making processes in contemporary etching. My images are explorations of metaphorical and mythological notions of dream life, surrealism and collage thinking. Each of them synthesizes my ongoing interest in imagery that is borne in the subconscious mind. These dreamlike images are poetic laboratories, that are not intended to satisfy the conscious mind but to open it. They often are also unpredictable juxtapositions with symbolic lyricism. Much of contemporary culture denies the mythical nature of dream visions even though they are ever present in the unconscious mind. I remain fascinated by the fact that the conscious mind requires rest but the subconscious mind is indefinitely active. I am compelled by the utter believability of dream visions. This phenomenon happens because there is a suspension of chemicals that are normally present in the brain required for conscious critical facilities. It is odd to me how people are baffled, amused and impressed by the enigmatic language of their dream life but remain dismissive of their innate value.

My etching images are conceived as poetic and visual laboratories. This work spontaneously interrelates consciousness imagery and the visualized realms of the subconscious mind. It honors a human desire to meaningfully reconnect with imagery emanating from our dream lives. The work is intended to evoke the imagination of viewers on different psychological levels via explorations of dream symbols and subconscious messaging that may not be readily accessible to language or rational thought.



It is my hope that visitors will not try to deconstruct these visions with dismissive adultlike rationalizations. Rather, it is my wish that viewers surrender to the representations of dream language and will their imaginations to be activated. I let each image-making process inform itself with complex intuitive choices. I am not a goal oriented visual artist. It is vital for me to shift through different artistic media to explore new artistic ideas, so I rarely experience creative





blocks. I continue to grow my artistic abilities, interests and confidence as I flow artistic inspiration through new media and new ways of creating visual art. However, I find myself continually returning to etching because of the warmth and the authority of the medium. I am drawn to the delicacy of the line work and tonal complexity of images impressed into paper. I also return to the mystique of the multistage process that creates detachment for me as the creator. This artistic journey in intaglio yields unexpected and exciting results as well as displeasing surprises. Thus, the very nature of the unpredictable makes the artistic struggle so satisfying.

#### Artist Information

I identify myself as a reverent pluralist. Reverence is commonly associated with one centralizing focus. In contrast to this, I feel a reverence for a multiplicity of interests, creative practices and imaginative world views that interconnect over time. Pluralism is fundamental to me. I enjoy moving through different media in order to explore and express new ideas and sensibilities. The subject of my images remains pluralistic, fluid and polymorphous. My artwork does not reflect me. It is an extension of myself.

John Graham is the Assistant Professor of Printmaking/Digital Media in the Department of Art & Art History at the University of Saskatchewan

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#### Image Documentation

*Dream Opener*, 2016, etching, 12" x 18"

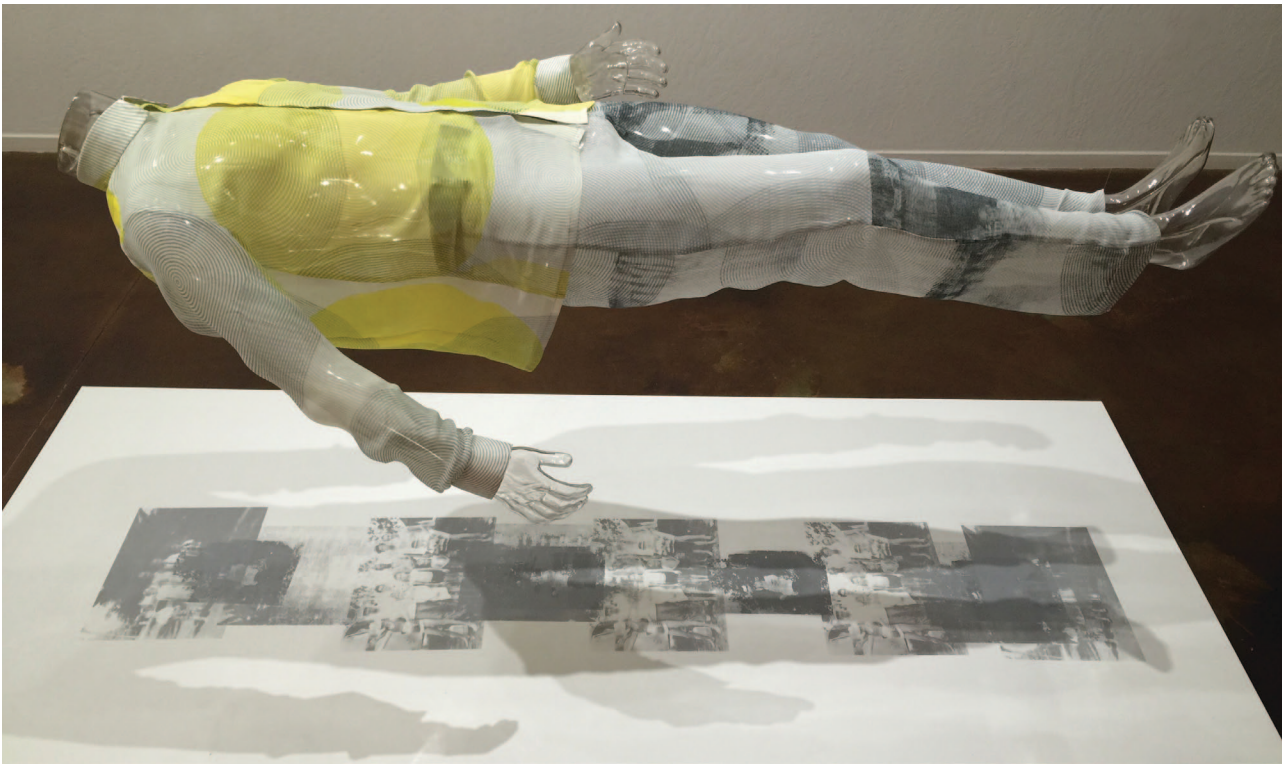
*Fiecely Open*, 2016, etching, 12" x 12"

*Now Watched*, 2016, etching, 12" x 12"

*Rabbit Faced*, 2016, etching, 12" x 12"

*The Sea Inside*, 2016, etching, 12" x 18"





## PRINTED FABRIC: A PERSONAL AND GLOBAL EVOLUTION OF PROCESS

By Tobin W. Keller

In the fall of 2015 I completed a one-year teaching sabbatical from Cabrillo College located in Aptos, Santa Cruz County. This was a first-time experience during my twenty-five year tenure. My sabbatical proposal consisted of personal art and research projects focused on printed fabric, including travel for research and a study of textile course curriculum in select public and private colleges and universities. The end result was a printed catalog of studies, travels, inspirations, and an exhibition at the Cabrillo College Gallery.

With an emphasis on printed fabric I organized visits to museums with significant collections of textile art or those dedicated to the exhibition and preservation of textiles and wearable art. Narrowing the research to European-printed garment fabric from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century helped. This decision left out a large portion of the history of textiles, including; China, Japan, Iran, Turkey, and India, where major innovators strongly impacted the evolution of printed fabrics. As my research evolved, it became clear that the global influence on trade was not limited to those countries. Techniques and processes were shared throughout a large part of the world. I also discovered significant collections in European and American cities. There were great resources in New York City, Los Angeles, and London, along with Paris, Lyon and Mullhouse in France.

My first museum visit was to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City to view the exhibition *Interwoven Globe* and to work at the Antonio Ratti Textile Center and Reference Library. The exhibition was a study of textiles, charting the cultural exchanges made possible by the early shipping trade routes that brought India, Asia, Europe and the Middle East closer together. It illuminated the evolution of fabric design, artistic customs and processes, and the impact of public demand. The Ratti Textile Center is one of the largest and most advanced facilities for the study and storage of textiles. Within this collection, I focused on hand-printed fabric.

I continued my travels to France, where I visited numerous museums and collections in Paris. One of these, the Museum of Decorative Arts located in the Louvre, was hosting a temporary exhibition entitled *Piero Fornasetti: La Folie Pratique*. This was a surprising inspiration. I hadn't known much about Fornasetti's work and I enthusiastically learned about his history as a printmaker, painter, and designer. His interpretation of eighteenth century engravings and design was compelling.

While in France I also traveled by train to the cities of Mullhouse and Lyon. In Mullhouse I visited The Museum of Printed Textiles. In 1833, a group of textile manufacturers formed the *Société Industrielle*, and decided to collectively archive the designs they produced. This collection grew in importance to become what is today the premier collection of printed textiles in the world, which offers artists and educators many opportunities for research.



The Museum of Textiles and Decorative Arts, which is located in the city of Lyon, consists of two distinct museums administered as one. Founded in 1864, the museum houses one of the largest international collections of textiles, which contains nearly two and a half million items. The collection spans a 4,000 year period, from antiquity to present, and covers a wide range of techniques and most geographical areas of the world. The history of Lyon's silk industry is particularly well represented in the collection, yet I discovered that the Maison des Canuts (silk workers) in the heart of the silk workers center of Lyon, was more informative about the process of weaving silk fabric.

I proceeded to London, England, where I visited the Clothworkers' Centre for the Study and Conservation of Textiles and Fashion, which houses the immense archive of the Victoria and Albert Museum, also in London. I had a scheduled appointment to view a selection of printed garments and fabric swatches, at the Clothworkers' Center, close to both the museum and the Chelsea district.

I had been directed to select a limited number of pieces prior to my visit to view in person, as I had been at the Ratti Textile Center at the Met. I was allowed to take notes and photograph the items, and very helpful staff members assisted me in handling the work. From here I ventured to the V&A hoping to view the Alexander McQueen exhibition, *Savage Beauty*, which was sold out online. Relieved to get a ticket, I was overwhelmed by the complexity and enormous size of this retrospective. Even before my journey into fabric printing, I was impressed and influenced by the artistic depth of this man's work.

A note about textile printing—this is the process of using certain tools and techniques of applying color to fabric in definite patterns or designs. In printing, wooden blocks, stencils, engraved plates, rollers, or screens can be used to place patterns on the fabric. Pigments used in printing contain dyes thickened to prevent the color from spreading by capillary attraction beyond the limits of the pattern or design.

As the European interest in imported *exotic* fabrics grew in the 17th century so did the processes in which fabric was produced. Embroidered and woven fabrics, such as silk jacquard, were highly regarded but expensive. As demand increased less costly methods of decorating fabrics were used. India produced some of these fabrics known as *chintz* and *calico*. This technique may have its origination in China but it was in India where it was perfected. It was here that cotton fabrics were made with block-printed mordants (a chemical fixative) and resists (a wax or paste). These printed fabrics were produced as substitutes for more expensive goods. The English used block printing on a cotton/linen blend to imitate the more expensive Italian silk damask. The Indian process of block printing chintz was far too complex and was never adapted by the Europeans. Instead, in the mid-seventeenth century, the French, English and Dutch developed a method of direct printing dyes (not mordants or resist) onto fabric. This process continued almost exclusively until the mid-eighteenth century when an Irish fabric printer developed copperplate printing using colorfast dyes. He sold his innovation to an English merchant and it spread to other calico printers throughout the Continent. Copperplate printing did not supersede





block printing immediately but was often used in addition for creating certain themes and for larger patterns. By the end of this century the copperplate method was adapted to roller or cylinder printing. This method eventually allowed for more than a single color to be printed and more yardage to be produced.

Stencil and screen printing has its history in China but was later adapted by Japanese artists. This technique was introduced to Western Europe in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century but wasn't widely used until the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Flatbed screen printing eventually evolved into rotary printing allowing textile manufactures to produce higher volumes. This method has been an industry standard but is quickly being replaced by the ease and access of digital textile printing. As an artist, flatbed and digital printing are methods I have been interested in for more than fifteen years, and incorporate both into my work.

As my art has evolved over the last three decades so has the process. My recent research and experiments have had a profound impact, reflected in the Cabrillo Gallery exhibition in the fall of 2015. During the research phase I started with image-based *Pictorial Prints*, which depicted pastoral scenes or sometimes portraits using the copperplate process. These fabric prints became very influential on the new series of work created during my sabbatical. Combining photo-screen stencils of my historic family photographs and optic graphic stencils I interwove the two creating a complexity of image and visual dynamics. I began as a painter with a strong graphic focus and a

direction leaning more towards painterly large-scale charcoal drawings. In the early nineties I hit an artistic roadblock and was encouraged by a friend to print plate monotypes with her during the summer of 1993. Working in the University of California, Santa Cruz, print studio I began an exploration with printed work that redirected my process entirely.

Monotype printing led into a brief stint with lithography and a published portfolio for the Smith Gallery at UCSC. A decade later I decided to take a course in screen printing. After a very frustrating semester I challenged myself to take the intermediate level course. This resulted in much greater satisfaction and potential for more evolved work. Screen printing can be a flexible technique because of its ability to print on different substrates. I've worked on large sheets of Plexiglas; printed and then fused glass, and transparent layers of other materials, eventually leading to the printed fabric work I'm doing today. Learning photo-screen printing, combined with digital manipulation, has made the biggest change in my process. Although photography has been a persistent love I had a strong resistance to working in a darkroom with chemicals. After numerous experiments and failures with photo-screen printing I eventually became pleased with the outcome and pursued larger and more complex pieces. Selections from a series of new work were part of a three-museum traveling exhibition in 2008. In 2009 a more comprehensive survey was presented at the Center for Photographic Arts (CPA) in Carmel. Entitled *Six Decades of Men and Other Portraits*, I presented life-sized and multi-layered, photo-screen printed portraits, glass portraits, paper prints and suspended portraits. I



also printed directly on the walls. This exhibition was a culmination of years of practice and exploration that represented an unforeseen evolution of work.

The unpredictability of evolution is ongoing. I never imagined printing fabric and then cutting and sewing it into wearable garments. Like most artists after a seminal event or intensive exhibition I reevaluated my art and practice. The life-sized portraits and fragile glass work was becoming problematic to manipulate and transport. I decided to experiment with lighter and less costly materials. Teaching myself to work with fabric dyes and de-colorants I began an in-depth exploration of fabric printing. This eventually led to a lengthy, educational, and successful collaboration with an expert pattern maker and clothing designer. I don't consider myself a clothing designer but rather a textile artist. After overcoming the initial psychological barriers and fears of this evolution I fully embraced my new path. Is this the last evolution of my work? Doubtful. An ongoing curiosity with experimentation of new and familiar processes will continue to guide me. But for now I really enjoy printing on fabric with its multi-layered effects. It's an old tradition and a very time consuming process. It is also satisfying and unique because of its connection with a global history and the human body.

#### Notes:

All mannequins are life-sized. Garments—men's medium to a women's size six to eight. The Cabrillo College gallery was divided into six separate spaces that vary in length and width.

#### Artist Information

After receiving my MFA from Mills College in 1985, where I studied painting with Jay DeFeo, my work has been exhibited nationally. The recent changes in the direction of my work include regional runway shows and wearable art exhibitions with recent publications in *Content*, a magazine representing Silicon Valley's innovative and creative culture. [www.tobinwkeller.com](http://www.tobinwkeller.com)

#### Image Documentation

Installation view—*Regeneration*, dye printed silk crepe acrylic ink on panel, *The Narrative Cloth*, Cabrillo Gallery, 2015

Designer: Jean-Baptiste Huet, 1745–1811, Paris, France. Printed cotton, Oberkampf Manufactory, 1785. Image courtesy of [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)

Petticoat, hand-drawn and painted cotton, with printed linen lining, ca. 1750–75. Made for the East India Company. Clothworkers' Center for the Study & Conservation of Textiles & Fashion, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, England.

Manufactured by Robert Jones, 1769, London, England. Printed linen and cotton. Image courtesy of [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)

*The Fortune Teller*, possibly John Collins for Nixon & Co., ca. 1765, Surrey, England. Printed linen and cotton.

Image courtesy of [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org)

Installation view—*Origin*, dye printed cotton and silk charmeuse, *The Narrative Cloth*, Cabrillo Gallery, October 2015.

Installation view—*Regeneration*, dye printed silk crepe acrylic ink on panel, *The Narrative Cloth*, Cabrillo Gallery, 2015. *Family*, 2015, dye printed silk broadcloth, 30" x 40"

Installation view—*Circles*, dye printed cotton and silk broadcloth, 9' x 25"

*The Narrative Cloth*, Cabrillo Gallery, October 2015, mannequin life size, garment size 4





## ROLF NESCH AND I—THE EVOLUTION OF THE METAL COLLAGRAPH

By Bill Ritchie

In the thirties, in Europe, Rolf Nesch developed his *metal grafik* platemaking method. Twenty years later, in Seattle, Glen Alps developed another method, the *collagraph*. About a decade later, I worked with both of them. In a world in which making printing plates was by etching, carving and cutting away, what was it that motivated them to add to, build up and assemble?

For Nesch it was chance incident, creativity, courage and a struggle to survive WWII. In Oslo, he was a bereft German, *entartete künstler*<sup>1</sup>, who immigrated to Norway just before Hitler invaded. Even Norway's great artist, Edvard Munch, could not help him. Only work kept Nesch from freezing to death.

Twenty years later, in Seattle, Glen Alps, a printmaking professor at the University of Washington in Seattle, staked his claim to fame with a name for built-up plates: *collagraph*. He was unaware of Nesch's work, nor of similar methods devised by Boris Margo, Edmond Casarella, Berkley Chappell, and Roland Ginzl. During that time, Charles Smith, a Georgia art teacher, published a book on collage printing plates in 1954; today it is a rare and collectible book.

When I started printmaking in the 1960s, the *how-to* of platemaking was a popular topic in art schools; technical processes were almost overriding artistry. Of necessity, I personalized Glen's and Nesch's motives and methods and this led me to join art and technology. It was at this time

that the Experiment in Arts and Technology organization (EAT) was formed as a collaboration between artists and engineers. This movement was to have an effect on me.

The times, my youth, and my tenuous position as instructor at the UW pressed me to join old world printmaking with new technologies that were sprouting all around Seattle. The study of Nesch's and Alps' methods later led me into the field of electronic arts.

My journey, which took about four years, began in 1966 when, from the new crop of San Jose State University graduates, Professor Alps hired me to teach collagraph at the University of Washington. It was a plum job. Born, raised and schooled in Washington State, I admired Glen Alps. He made the UW the hub of Northwest printmaking, and printmaking was my passion.

Alps, at 52, was a master of printmaking. Despite being half Alps' age, I think I taught well. My collagraph syllabus grew to near book length. Still, I had to hustle—win prizes and grants, lecture for museums, have shows, design an exhibition, and run workshops. Meanwhile, on my own in our home basement, I kept up my etching and lithography work.

Alps was a driven man too—evangelizing, exhibiting and promoting collagraphs. Because he believed that the collagraph had all the properties that any art student needed, he developed a pedagogy which sometimes verged on the spiritual. He designed a monster press to go with what he called, "the idea of the *collagraph*." Some, however, felt Alps' *my way or the highway* was not scholarly and some students found it dogmatic.





Walking a line in the middle of a technical, political and academic conflict, it was sometimes hard to respond to students' questions. Many were Vietnam War protestors and vets who would neither tolerate autocracy nor a wishy-washy instructor. Looking for answers, I turned to printmaking history to find the origins of built-up printing plates, searching beyond mere innovation for its own sake. For months I pussyfooted between two camps: Alps' devoted students and old guard faculty and the other camp of Young Turk faculty and students who were asking for etching, screen printing, lithography and photo processes. Then came a turning point.

It happened in November of 1967 during an all-day field trip to Canada to see the Vancouver Print International. Prints from all of the big names were there—Picasso, Miro, Dali, and dozens more from around the world—and, most importantly, Rolf Nesch.

When I saw the print by Nesch I was stunned. It was alive! The paper was knobby, bright with raw color, deeply cut in places by wire and screen. His print, *Snake Eater*, won first prize of CA\$5,000—about US\$25,000 today.

Beside the print hung the plate—framed like a work of art itself. The pairing was an epiphany to me—forms and function blended—as though the print had been lifted off an ink-daubed sculpture. The plate was made of soldered wire, perforated sheet metal, twisted and woven together and laid over an etched zinc plate. That same energy might have been what Alps was after in his collagraphs.

Rolf Nesch was known only to a few outside of Europe—and he was new to me. I wondered why Nesch came to

make his *metal grafik* pictures. It was important to me to compare Alps and Nesch and understand what motivated them. Besides, I was working on a major exhibit, *Prints/Multiples*, for the UW's Henry Gallery, and the comparison of Nesch with the other artists would fit in.

During the time I studied Nesch's life story, the artist Stephen Hazel moved his studio to Seattle, and we became friends. He advised me, "Go to Norway. You'll be scared, terrified, but go!" Stephen knew what it was like to approach an artist of this stature as he had worked with Hideo Hagiwara in Japan. Norman Lundin, a painter who had studied Munch's paintings, said: "See Munch's prints, too, if you can get there."

Norman suggested applying for a Fulbright, but my grant applications failed. I wrote to Rolf Nesch anyway and asked if I could come and work with him. Nesch's wife, who was the actress Ragnhild Hald, wrote back to me:

"My husband will have a major exhibition in Detroit 16th of March this spring. We will both be there.... Welcome! The best greetings, from Ragnhild and Rolf Nesch" In other words, if they liked me after meeting me, then I maybe could come. I started Norwegian classes. I applied for a bank loan. I requested a leave of absence from the UW. Everything was set.

In April I met Rolf and Ragnhild in Detroit at his retrospective and we got acquainted. I was in awe of this man. He had seen so much; he knew Kirchner and Munch and was part of the German Expressionist movement and overcame hardships that art teachers like Alps and I never knew. Three weeks later, Lynda, my wife, and I flew to





In all, it was a 10,000 mile, three-month trip for us. Landing back in Seattle with my plates and trial proofs was a major triumph for an ordinary 28-year old instructor. That is a “three-strikes-and-you’re-out” rank in academe; but, in nine more years, I was a full professor.

As many new doors opened for me during my nineteen years’ teaching, I left the world of institutionalized printmaking. My journey, which was inspired by Alps’ and Nesch’s innovations in platemaking, brought me to use video for art and education; and computer graphics worked into my printmaking and design work. Alps and Nesch taught me to examine one’s motives for innovation.

I believe I lived in a privileged time, at the age of 25, with a ticket to experience sea changes in the printmaking world. Process is not only about matter, materials and craft. Process is also about ways that methods and chance incidents shape life in the immaterial, virtual world (gamified, as it were, and recursive). As T. S. Eliot said: “We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> ‘Degenerate artist,’ a term adopted by the Nazi regime in Germany to describe virtually all modern art.

## Artist Information

Bill Ritchie lives and works in Seattle. He is working on a book, *Rolf Nesch and I*. Bill’s videos on Youtube include one showing Rolf Nesch at work.

Thanks to the California Printmakers Society for inviting me to tell about my quest in printmaking.

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## Image Documentation

The author’s framed printing plate made of soldered metals on an etched zinc plate. *Untitled*, 1969, metal collage. 16" x 22", Bill Ritchie. Courtesy of the Mini Art Gallery, Seattle.

*Target and Road No. 3*, 1969, 16" x 22", Metal graphic, Bill Ritchie. Courtesy of the Mini Art Gallery, Seattle.

Rolf Nesch, left, printing with his assistant Engeburt, ca. 1969. Screenshot from Clifford West’s film adapted for Youtube, “Rolf Nesch Tribute,” see at: <https://youtube/6X9HkIS-Gug>.

*The Snake Eater*, 1966, 23" x 19", metal relief print, printed on White van Gelder Zonen paper. Second trial proof printed by Rolf Nesch. Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, NY, the John S. Newberry Fund.

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Oslo. A week later we got off the train between Oslo and Bergen, in Aal, and from there we went up a snowy hillside road to Nesch’s beautiful studio which he’d built next to an old Norwegian farmhouse, their mountain retreat.

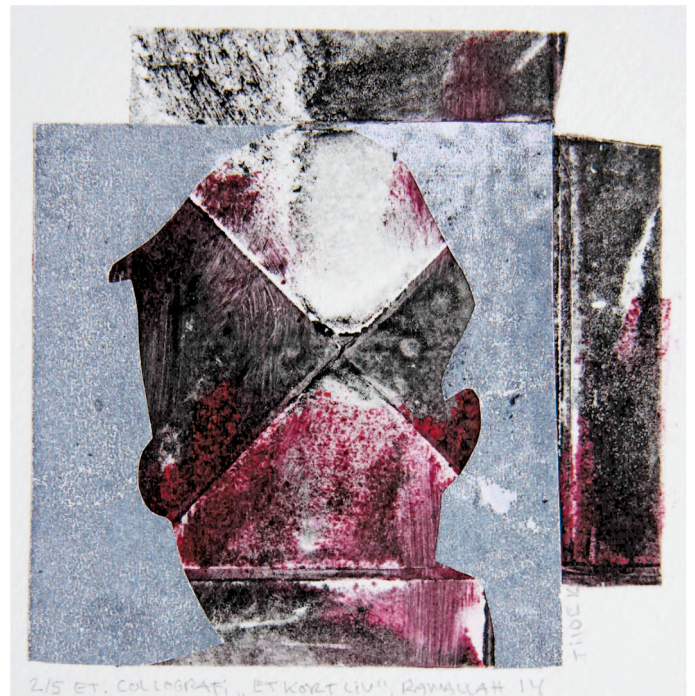
After my first day in Nesch’s studio I wrote:

May 11, 1969: He (Nesch) had already inked up the background plate for his Pegasus print. He used a collection of bristle brushes...dip into an open jar of oil and then into one of the open dry pigment containers, work it around with his brush and then paint it on the plate. He didn’t wipe the plate; instead he removed extra ink with a brayer...without wiping *a la poupée*.

I was impressed by the apparently inarticulate manner in which he proceeded, yet how he was deft with the brush...all of his moves were under control. All the time, even as he was putting the plate on the press bed, he was touching at it, pulling off a bit here, blending or toning a little there. I knew this is not his first *Pegasus*, but the whole experience was fresh.

The next day Nesch pointed to a huge sheet of zinc and handed me a hacksaw to cut some for my plate. In two weeks I had built and completed a *metal grafik* plate. Lynda was many months pregnant and felt isolated while I worked those long days, so Rolf and Ragnhild understood when I told them we had to move on. They bought one of my state proofs and also arranged for us to live at the Munch Museum, in Oslo, at their expense. There, I could study Munch’s prints, plates, blocks and lithograph stones, plus make photos for the *Prints/Multiples* show.





## THE PROCESS OF MAKING FIVE MINI PRINTS NAMED "A SHORT LIFE"

By Tilde Louise Carlsen

It can be very frustrating for artists not to know if they are on the right track when working. But they have to get out in the sphere where they really do not know what they are doing to produce living art.

This process of disengagement always begins for artists by doing what they have to do, whether it is playing musical scales, making color exercises in visual arts or training the body in dance.

It is very down-to-earth and yet very abstract at the same time, starting with the questions "How and Why am I doing this?"

I often start by combining a lot of things, including tones, shapes or colors, which do not make any sense or work very well together. Or I start with one idea and end up with something completely different. In both practices, there is a point where the artwork itself simply takes over and guides me to the end.

The graphics in this article started with an idea of making a documentation of all the children murdered in Gaza in the summer of 2014 and ended up as a tiny graphic work with five small prints of only one single boy.

What happened during this process? My own reality integrates the idea and the work process, taking over so that the viewer is able to follow the flow in it. There is a point where the artist has to let go of ambitions and intellectual thinking and work from the heart and from personal

intuition. From these places the artwork takes form. At this point in my idea development for the *Gaza Children* it did not make sense to count numbers of the dead. All those numbers of dead we are confronted with in the media are an intellectual way of handling the overwhelming loss of every single murdered child; it is in fact a way of setting up a distance from the pain. I had to count down and concentrate on that one single boy who is now representing all children murdered in all wars.

Maybe this is at the bottom of what I call the "U" in the "U-theory," where creativity begins to flow from another source other than the intellect.

We have in Denmark a musician named Peter Bastian who has been very engaged in describing the creative process. He talks about how artwork can create a space where we are just wondering about what is happening here and now, a space where a transformation is going on, so that the outcome is something bigger than the artist, bigger than the receiver, and bigger than the artwork itself.

Peter Bastian also explains how we as artists can recognize when things fall into the right place and when it does not work. This is our job, too, but how can we see this and who are we when we can see it? It is not a logical thing but another language: a language of the heart and mind that is distinct from the rational way of thinking.

When I heard this description of what art can do, I remembered myself as a child, totally open to the new world I had just begun to take in.

The boy in my graphic pieces was just at that point and never got the chance to go further on this planet. Hence I





felt the urge to make a piece of artwork with his image. It was too overwhelming to work with every one of all these children. I saw on the Internet that there was a lot of work being done to honor every single one of them. However I could not get these children out of my mind, but by working with my hands and the printing press I could finally let them go and rest in peace. In this way, intellect and emotion join to form one cohesive work of art.

Where and how can an artist show such horrible and personal suffering without harming the people involved? I had a problem with this artwork and also with another one of a girl who had been stoned. I could not exhibit the works everywhere. In a church I felt it was okay, or when I have a solo exhibition. But they need a room for contemplation and can not be part of commercial art, such as artwork hanging in a medical office, where the purpose is something else than the art itself.



### Artist Information

Visual Artist, working with New Nordic Watercolor, painting and printing. Member of The Nordic Watercolor Society and The Funen Printmaker Workshop. She lives in Denmark.

[www.tildeart.dk/](http://www.tildeart.dk/)

[www.nordicwatercolour.org/](http://www.nordicwatercolour.org/)

[www.fynsgv.dk/](http://www.fynsgv.dk/)

### Image Documentation

*Gaza Child I*, 2014, photocopy, transfer & collagraph, 10" x 10"

*Gaza Child II*, 2014, photocopy, transfer & collagraph, 10" x 10"

*Gaza Child III*, 2014, photocopy, transfer & collagraph, 10" x 10"

*Gaza Child IV*, 2014, photocopy, transfer & collagraph, 10" x 10"

*Gaza Child V*, 2014, photocopy, transfer & collagraph, 10" x 10"





## FINDING CROOKED CREEK

By Marissa Angel

*Finding Crooked Creek* depicts the stream that encircles my childhood memories. Winding its way around my parent's property, this creek has been a constant in my life. Memories of childhood and youth are intertwined with the trees growing on its banks and the rocks glistening in its waters. *Finding Crooked Creek* is a large etching, thirty two feet wide and six feet tall. Interspersed within the overall image are large etchings and large clay drawings. These drawings are made with raw, unprocessed clay that I harvested from the banks of Crooked Creek. It was important for me that the clay be a literal connection to the creek, and that the color of the pigment would be unique to the source. The process of collecting the clay was significant, in that I was helped by my brother, who shares many of my memories of the creek. The etchings are comprised of five separate plates that are then pieced together to create a larger composition. This creates a subtle grid throughout the image, mirroring the lines created by the connection of the panels. This break from reality created by the geometric grid adds to the unreal quality, and fragmentation created by the shifts of perspective.

Fragments of a specific location, from different perspectives and locations, are merged together to create an overall composition, an imagined landscape based on reality. The image is created by depicting a selection of a larger landscape, and using photography as a reference. The scene is based on reality and informed by memory. The connecting panels comprised of clay drawings fill in the

gaps between the panels comprised of etchings. This forces a continual landscape to occur, in which the perspective may or not be accurate. It is not necessary that the resulting landscape becomes an accurate representation of that which exists today, or even that which exists in the past. The landscape is a combination of my personal memories of a location created with clay and photographs to document a moment of reality.

I am combining two processes, painting and printmaking, which are in opposition to each other. The etchings are drypoint on acrylic sheeting, a man-made material not found in nature. They require precision and attention to detail to create. The clay drawings are loose, gestural creations utilizing natural pigment. By forcing these contrasting methods to work with each other a visual tension is created, which evokes tension in the viewer. The splattering of clay creates an unpredictable abandon of control, and also serves to connect the panels visually, softening the shift from an image created from memory to one of a twist on reality. The resulting landscape becomes both serene and discomfiting. A subtle application of clay over the etching creates a softening of the sharp contrast of values in the etching itself. Through use of the extreme darks in areas of the clay, and the absence of color I intend to create an unnatural feeling in the viewer. By working large, I bring a selection of a landscape into the gallery space. This brings the viewer into the landscape by filling much of the line of sight, and also the viewer's peripheral vision.

The use of clay creates an ebb and flow from realism to gestural representation and back again. This continual





shifting from end to end of the landscape mirrors the flow of the stream depicted. The calm of a meandering stream and the use of a material that creates a sepia tone provokes reminiscence, much like an old photograph of a place from one's childhood. Connected to this is the idea of loss and the idea that time moves in a linear direction, preventing a return to the past. Selected areas are left with minimal mark-making; white space is utilized to create depth; and there are areas with a deliberate lack of information. These empty spaces represent the areas that memory cannot fill.

I began with photographs. By revisiting Crooked Creek and documenting it through photography, I captured its existence in that moment. I selected four photographs, of four different locations along the creek to recreate as etchings. The etchings came first. I knew I would be drawing back into them using clay, but first came the time-consuming process of carving into plexiglass to create plates. By utilizing a Dremel, I was able to capture quick gestural marks, as well as precisely made marks. The action of etching creates a meditative experience. The hum and vibration of the machine; the almost monotonous repetition of movement; and the concentration required provide a creative experience that is both strenuous and contemplative.

In practicality, this tool also allowed my prints to become larger. An early obstacle to overcome was the limitations of the printing press to which I had access. The size I found necessary for my work would not fit through the press in one piece. I had to problem-solve this and decided to break down the prints into smaller plates that could then

fit through the press. I first cut down the plexiglass and carved the image into the surface after the plates were cut down. By placing two plates next to one another, I could continue lines from one plate to another. I placed blown-up photographs under the plates, which were drawn back into, to use as a guide for the etchings. Often, under the etchings, I also placed black construction paper, which has ties to photography in that the combination of black paper with the etched plexiglass is very much like viewing a negative. The print would be the reverse of what I was seeing every day, black instead of white, and a mirror of what I was carving. The time-consuming process allowed me time to think, to plan, and to become familiar with every line of the prints.

While I was systematically working on the prints, beginning to pull images, and piecing them back together, I was also experimenting with using clay as a drawing medium. The clay harvested from Crooked Creek was raw and unprocessed. I experimented with various mixtures, combining clay with water, and acrylic medium to act as a binding agent.

As I finished an etching panel, I drew back into it with the clay mixture, using only my hands to apply the clay to the paper. By using only my hands to apply the raw clay I left part of myself in the work. By deliberately allowing fingerprints to be a part of the piece, my identity is integrated within the art.

Once those panels were complete, I was able to begin working on the missing pieces. I placed a blank panel between two finished panels and began to draw from





memory. I used the finished pieces as puzzle pieces to dictate to me that I must then connect them to each other and create an alternate landscape, based upon my memory and intuition.

When all the panels were connected to each other, I laid them out on the floor of my studio space and splattered them with clay, allowing further unity to the form and connecting the segments of this created landscape.

My creative process is inexplicably intertwined with the idea of control. I have never been comfortable with the idea of losing control, personally, artistically or physically. My work is a contradiction in which I force myself to let go of control and embrace chaos. By creating detailed, highly rendered, and hyper-realistic etchings I create a very precise, controlled image. The process of painting back into these images with a medium and technique that gives me little control is an exercise in trusting my own intuition and reveling in the unexpected and unpredictable. The clay drawings become spontaneous, and embrace a lack of control. The medium itself forces unpredictability and loose representation. By restricting myself to only my own hands as a method of applying clay pigment, I exert control, setting parameters that I must follow, while simultaneously removing control from myself by utilizing a method that prevents precision. By embracing both sides of a whole, the need to control and the acceptance that there is no control, I express my own relationship with the act of making the piece, as well as the relationship of humanity to nature and the natural world.



### Artist Information

As an environmentally motivated artist, my work considers the relationship between the people and the planet. I am intrigued by the connections between humanity and our surrounding landscapes. By presenting my own recollections, and exploring my own connection to nature, my intention is to use my work to remind the viewer of their relationship to the natural world. I live in Virginia.

[www.marissaangel.com](http://www.marissaangel.com)

### Image Documentation

*Finding Crooked Creek*, drypoint etching 2015 in progress

Acrylic Plate in process, using a Dremel to etch, *Finding Crooked Creek*, 2015

Detail: *Crooked Creek*, drypoint etching, Clay, 2015

*Finding Crooked Creek*, drypoint etching, Clay, 2015, 6' x 23', photo by Matthew J. Brown

Portrait of the Artist, with drypoint etchings, 2013.





## INVOKING MYTHIC WOMEN PROJECT

**Project directed by Barbara Furbush, reported by Kate Mulligan**

I have been creating body prints of my own for decades. I weave my passions with printmaking into everyday life by encouraging anyone and everyone to participate in the creative process. My artwork invites viewers to become participants, inspiring a sense of mystery, and a stirring of our inner psychological workings. What is important to me is the emotional effect, the ease of participation, and the joy of immediacy, reminiscent of the prehistoric handprints on cave walls, echoing the same life-affirming “I am here.”

The *Mythic Women* project didn’t start out as mythic at all, but by the end, it had inspired my friend, Leberta, a local opera singer to say “I now want to produce body prints that align more appropriately with the mystic/mythic quality of the songs I perform, to reinforce my performance with all my creative tools, not just my voice.”

How did we travel from the simple body prints to Leberta’s declaration? In July 2016, the *Mythic Women* project launched with this invitation:

I am beginning a new art installation and invite you to join in creating this work!

The *Mythic Women* project inspires you to think about the ladies of intrigue or influence in your lives. Muse about those potent beings—mythic or fabled (fictitious or historic)—or familiar (personal experiences). Then think about a typical pose to portray that inspirational figure. With guidance, the participants make body prints on large paper

and are encouraged to elaborate on the image.... These life-sized prints will be combined along a gallery wall as a consolidated work, along with the *FaceBookK* pages in an exhibition in November.

Enthusiastically, Maryly Snow held a working session at Snow Studios in Oakland, with three other colleagues. It was there that I decided to use a 40" wide plastic film plate as the most efficient way to ink a large surface.

Afterwards, Maryly traveled to Monterey to redo the *Mythic Woman Ina Coolbrith*. This time, she was able to maintain a greater control over the stance, which demonstrated Ina’s reading of her poetry, and with that greater sense of the process, she planned out her moves for a second *Mythic Woman Esther Williams*.

Not all participants were printmakers, but several other California Society of Printmakers members participated: Pamela Takigawa was Athena with her owl signifying her wisdom. Nora Partido ignited by her Dragon Lady, enjoyed fanning the flames of her alter ego as she worked. Sue Howe, after a lively dinner conversation, decided to ride off on a camel with Queen of the Desert, Gertrude Bell, an accomplished archaeologist. Michelle Wilson was awed by a Black American female, Bree Newsome, who climbed the flagpole at the South Carolina Statehouse to take down the Confederate flag in 2015 and Robyn Smith, artistic mentor to many, chose her mother for the richness and wonder of her days.

There was an enlightening first step towards the full body print process: the *FaceBookK* project. (Having our faces pressed firmly onto card stock, covering an inked plate.)



Our individual learning curves spiraled together as we worked; laughter erupted amid discussing the possibilities of utilizing kitchen implements, gauze curtains, and fingernails as possible new tools. Along with *Mythic Women* sessions came legendary stories, personal revelations, and dinner parties where we exchanged not only our newfound identities, but shared our thoughts on the art of the pose, and approaches we imagined we would need to take for a successful print.

As I worked with women one at a time, I found there was shyness about the nudity, but in that graceful moment at least, came an acceptance, a curiosity of how it would look, then surprise. These figures are so abstracted, yet convey a message through their stance, the variations of pressure, and the choice of emphasis with line. For one woman in transition, the session was cathartic. One spoke of seeing her imprint as a revelation ritual; it assisted her exploration of her own identity coming to terms with her body image. Regardless, all of the participating women, in that moment, put themselves in a purposeful frame of mind and moved forward with the directions and task at hand—they became professional models.

The processes used to create this tribute were primitive. Finding the materials that could be used life size and portable was my first task. For the test prints a 4'x2' mahogany ply board was inked standing against the wall. Knowing that a 4'x8' board would be too heavy to maneuver easily between wall and floor, I experimented with a sheet of .005 ml plastic film taped to the wall as the plate. It was only inked to about 38" wide to mitigate an

offset or migration to undesired surfaces. I continued the entire series using it. With wear, it did wrinkle and stretch, lending a primitive characteristic to the prints.

I started with Graphic Chemical black and ink extender, which needed to be very loose to avoid sticking when lifting the print. This dried too quickly when working with such a large size, so I switched to Akua Black and transparent inks. The ink on the inking slab and the matrix was continually renewed without cleaning up between sessions during the three and a half month active period. Because Akua does not dry quickly, time and waste were spared, but moving the large scale works was problematic.

Experimenting on the smaller scale, with 4" and 8" brayers, then an assortment of squeegee-like implements, all proved inadequate. I had a 12" Chameleon roller; its light weight was a back-saver as I rolled down the entire length of the wall refreshing the ink on the matrix. Trying to roll any other direction was counterproductive.

Asian papers, being thinner, are more sensitive to this relatively light pressure process. The first experiments used 18" wide *shuji* paper, great for portraying the torso dramatically, but limiting to expanded gestures. Other papers used were 27" and 38" heavyweight mulberry as well as 44" *Asuka*. (Hiromi Papers, Los Angeles). A few prints were executed on 40" Grafix Clear-Lay plastic film with the intent of layering these images over some of the others on different substrates. Two prints are on 36" bond paper, to test the feasibility of commonly found materials. Rolls provided the flexibility to determine height of poses.



Each session began with a face print to provide an example of the process on a manageable scale. A 9"x6" plate was inked, placed into a folded 8½" x 11" piece of cardstock, and a transparent cover sheet was placed on top to protect the face from ink. Initially I let participants just "go at it" just to see what their pattern of movement was and the clarity of the resulting print, then gave specific instruction when needed. The chosen face prints, where women identified their mythic being, evolved into an interactive type of page similar to Facebook profile pages. These pages were bound together in an accordion style book to provide guidance to the images on the gallery wall.

Next we moved on to the body printing stage. After a few sessions, I learned to have the women practice their poses first, both against a wall and on the floor to understand the logistics of their positions and see which worked best for them. Prints made against the wall tended to be easier to construct in pieces, although they were lighter and more delicate from less pressure. For those made on the floor, the orchestration of moving into the space without creating a lot of unwanted marks was a challenge.

Often, I would hand a participant a small brayer, instructing her to even out the ink left on the matrix after the last participant, thus a print lesson was taught surreptitiously, while I prepared the large roller to lay fresh ink down. Once the paper was laid in position, the actual imprinting happened very quickly. In some instances I drew around strategic parts of the pose—hands, heads—to give emphasis while the model was still in place. After hanging the new print ink side out to assess the image, some decided to enhance their images by adding tracings—a small piece of transparency was inked; laid on a select area, and marks made. Even the uninitiated began to wield a brayer edge as if born to create. One printmaker created a woodblock to be included with her character.

At the end of the session, more than one woman cried out in new appreciation, "This is hard work!"

About a third of the women were experienced printmakers, with half having some familiarity with the technique. One quarter of the women did not consider themselves artists and in supporting them, I continued to evolve as director of this project. In the end, all were excited to be part of it.

The preparation, introspection, and set-up for the actual prints took most of the time and energy invested; the prints themselves were a fleeting moment. I am happy to report that some participants decided to hold future sessions to explore the process further and to keep their newfound creativity engaged.



### Artist Information

Barbara Furbush, through printmaking, investigates the psychological implications of the shadow-forms implied by bodyprint images. Her process invites us to participate and creates moments of deep self-reflection. The *Mythic Women* project bestowed license of empowerment to the women; who are each mythic in their own right. Her studio is in Pacific Grove, California

[www.bfurbushart.com](http://www.bfurbushart.com)

### Image Documentation

*Gathering*, initial proof, 2017, Hand prints, graphite transfer; photopolymer etching, 8" x 10"

*Seducing Zeus*, 2016, hand, ink transfer; face petro, gel with carborundum; 2 solar plates, 10" x 8"

*Robynn Smith Honors Her Mother Who Fills Her Days With Richness and Wonder*, 2016, body print, 38" x 60", Robynn Smith/ Barbara Furbush

*Wallflowers*, 1989, layered bodyprints

*Mythic Women* project participants:

Back row l to r: Helen MacKinlay, Lebertal Loral, Bonnie Tucker, Karen Hunting, Laura Williams, Melissa Pickford, Susan Howe, Ginny Crapo, Trudy Levy, Pamela Takigawa, Nora Partido, Gaye O'Shaughnessy, Barbara Furbush  
Front row l to r: Sophia Zadubera, Cookie Henderson, Maryly Snow, Helen Ogden, Joan Jeffers McCleary, Margie Cohen, Note: implicit consent for MW photograph



## IMPRINTS OF SPACES

**By Marine Lefebvre**

**What is printmaking for me?**

I see printmaking as a simple and primitive activity, like playing or cooking. It is a space of freedom. The lively rhythm of tasks induced by the process produces a state of mind which is for me similar to a sort of “trance”. This state is the origin of images which are specific to printmaking. It is as if the images were inhabited by this rhythm, this endless movement. I look to create welcoming landscapes in my work which reflect the pleasure, the joy and the beautiful rhythm of printing. That is why I let the process of construction be visible in the images. The layers are visible. That is also why the elements are not perfectly defined—in that sense they are left open to the viewer’s own interpretation. Developing the images is simple; I want to share this simplicity with the viewer.

**How do I make prints?**

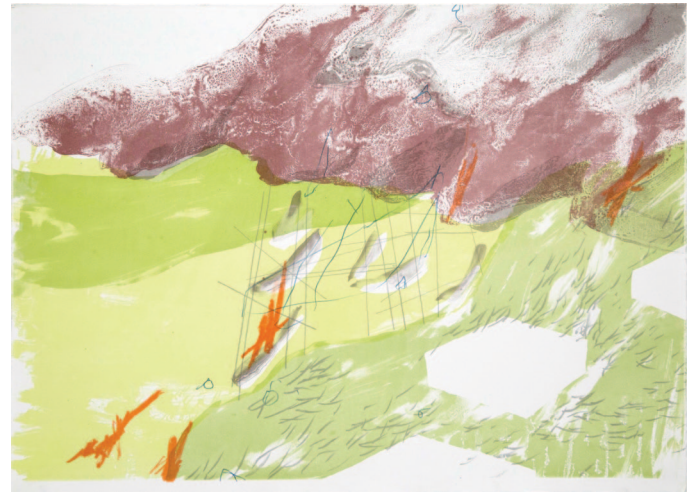
I collect elements from different places in order to compose a personal space; I draw and take pictures of environments which I discover (Poland, Northern Ireland, New Mexico, Madrid). By doing this, I create an archive of drawings and pictures which I constantly enhance with new elements from films, books and documentaries. By mixing elements from this archive I compose landscapes in the studio. I do lots of sketches, and after a while something appears, a kind of space which I was unconsciously looking for at the moment. I have grabbed something. The ideas of this space are produced by a

combination of my archive of souvenirs and the reality of the space where I am at the moment. Then further work with this space begins. These landscapes evolve through the process of printmaking. I try to make them become something else by playing with the surprises found in the techniques of printmaking. The textures of the aquatint; the lines produced by etching; the textures of lithography offer other dimensions to this mental space. The techniques themselves create an atmosphere; the same landscape produced by etching will have a totally different feeling than the one produced by lithography or woodcut. It is as if I let the technique itself talk and take the space over. The space which came out of the sketches’ state evolves, thanks to the beautiful surprises offered by the process and the layering. It offers a state of mind which is freed from self judgment and consciousness because of the undirected relation between the mind and the final image due to the matrix. When I work instinctively, I am able to produce images closer to intimate sensations.

**What am I looking for by making prints?**

I think that I am constantly trying to catch a space that I would describe as “running away”. By this, I mean that I depict a space which is always changing. The spaces I describe in prints are closely linked to my intimate feelings about the environment in which I find myself. These spaces function as if they were witnesses to my presence somewhere, a proof that I am really in a place. In that sense, the prints are the result of a sort of frottage between my own intimate mental space and the reality of the environment in which I am. I want to offer a space of meditation to the viewer. By making images, I want to





create dialogue between different selves—mine and the viewer's. In that way I try to keep a window open into my intimate space. For me this window is a rich way to communicate and create honest and instinctive dialogue between intimate emotions, the viewer's and mine. Indeed, the spaces represented are linked to reality, because I want to share the experience of a real space I have made. Even if this reality evolves through the processes of drawing and printmaking, I keep in mind the sensation of the reality I want to share with the viewer and try to make it understandable by means of the image. I have always been attracted by the process of constructing spaces. The deepest memory I have of childhood, the one I refer to when I make images, is that memory of playing with materials to build houses with Legos and small things—huts with sheets of tissue and branches; structures with paper and wire fences; and tracks with sand and rocks. This happened everywhere: in my bedroom, in parks, in the gardens of my friends and parents and mostly in my grandparents' big garden. This garden was a field in which every corner was a potential play space. In this field, used by my grandfather to build garden structures for growing vegetables, I was always building useless structures, huts and senseless things. My interest in creating spaces has evolved. I used to want to be an architect; then I studied set design for theatre, but I find printing images provides more freedom and intimacy. Nevertheless I kept my interest in creating inhabitable spaces. My prints represent spaces waiting to be lived in, as if they were architecture or set design. I want them to induce an intimate experience and projection of personal thoughts. From my point of view, it is easier to

project intimate thoughts in immense open spaces, like a forest, desert or sea. It is as if the thoughts could elicit better feelings in an immense landscape; that is why I represent open spaces. I use smaller elements in the back to create depth. I do not use representations of the human figure, but instead try to draw in the viewer through playing with the scale of the elements and the depth of the space.

### **How are these spaces built?**

As said earlier, these spaces appear by means of drawing and the making of random landscape sketches. The space is a fragile grasping of something always moving, almost always running away. I create its appearance by playing with my personal archive of images and souvenirs of sensations. I establish a few more or less abstract rules for which the space has to obey. It depends on what I need at the moment. The rules evolve. On some days the space has to be tropical; other days, it has to have immense water surfaces. It is like playing a game with changing rules and endless solutions, nevertheless, with a few constant elements, for example, the sense of immensity. The process is an endless updating of this mental space. The attraction I have for this space is based on its discovery. In that sense, I have to keep a certain distance from it in order to maintain its attraction. I discover and re-discover these spaces; I am excited and surprised by the new ones, but, at the same time, afraid that they might be the last ones. They appear and disappear, they are uncertain but at the same time, they are the only things I can count on or trust. As soon as the space is put onto the paper, it loses its attraction.



I almost do not look at it, it is as if I came too close. Similarly, with printmaking techniques, I find surprises which enrich the discovery of this space. By working in series—I usually work in a series of four, five or six prints at the same time—I intend to represent varied points of view in the same space, under different weather conditions. In this way I am unable to maintain my conceptual distance to the space. The experience reveals a sample of each of its facets, and so the viewer and I can not know it fully and come too close to it.

#### **What is my experience when working with printmakers?**

For me, working with a printmaker is like playing together, like two children who create their playground with absurd rules. Through the reaction of the one to the other, based on the evolving actions of each person, a specific conversation appears, in a language which is set up and understood only by these two protagonists. A beautiful unspoken dialogue can be established between the printmaker and the artist. I have worked in different workshops: in Paris with René Tazé and Michael Woolworth; in Northern Ireland at Secourt Print Workshop; and in Santa Fe, USA, at Landfall Press. I have observed a lot; I have assisted printmakers; and I have been able, a few times, to make my own work there. As I am still a student, the works I have done with printmakers were mainly at school—at the ENSAD (Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs) in Paris and at the RCA (Royal College of Art) in London. At the ENSAD I have interacted a lot with the printer Luc Guérin. It has been a pleasure to make prints with someone who understands

so easily where I am and where I want to go and all the ways in which it is possible to experiment. I like this simple relationship based on the fact that we are working with materiality. There is no abstraction; everything is here. It is like a garden, with rules that must be respected to make the plants grow and all the surprises of the unexpected meeting of various materials.

#### **Artist Information**

Marine Lefebvre lives and works in London and Paris. Her work aims to create unrealistic uncanny spaces through prints, drawings and installations.

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#### **Image Documentation**

*Transferred Nearby I*, 2016, lithography on Sommerset, 80x65 cm

*Shifting Around III*, 2016, lithography on Sommerset, 80x65 cm

*Shifting Around II*, 2016, lithography on Sommerset, 80x65 cm

*Transferred Nearby III*, 2016, lithography on Sommerset, 80x65 cm





## AN UNCONVENTIONAL PRINTMAKING PROCESS USING CLAY

**By Bonnie Randall Boller**

One day I noticed a striking and very unusual print on the wall at my ceramic supplier. It appeared to be a monoprinting technique like no other I had seen. It was printed on a fabric in an abstract technique, like glazes on pottery. It felt like a serendipitous connection, and I wanted to know how it was produced. The print was created by Pam Steff Toki, the store owner's wife, from Leslie Ceramics in Berkeley, CA. It was called a clay monotype, a technique of printing with liquid clay onto a fabric substrate. Why wasn't this process mentioned in other printmaking classes and books? Intrigued by how it might have been created, my quest to learn this unfamiliar process began. I had been a ceramic artist and printmaker for many years when I first saw Pam's work. It seemed more than a coincidence that both of my current art methods had collided into an unconventional printmaking technique. Yet clay printmaking is not new. The earliest art technique that is similar was pictograph paintings done with colored liquid clay on cave walls by early humans.

Is this form of clay monotype/clay printing truly a type of printmaking? The inventor was Mitch Lyons, a clay artist in Pennsylvania. Since Lyons invented the technique in 1972, this unfamiliar process has rapidly developed across the United States and worldwide. After discovering clay printing, I immersed myself in the technique and produced hundreds of prints and developed my own voice with the medium. The technique proved legitimate as a

form of printmaking. In a relatively short time I was juried and accepted as the first clay printer in the more than the century old, California Society of Printmakers. It was a great honor for me.

I am a native and lifetime resident of Alameda, CA and graduated with a BA in Art from California State University, East Bay. College catalyzed a deep seated need to explore creativity and artistic expression. The evolution of this exploration has taken me to a variety of art mediums such as ceramics, clay printing and encaustic. These transitions do not result in abandonment of any previous medium, but broaden my growth in the artistic process.

New insights emerged when I reflected on my art education and 30 years of experience with production, concept, design, painting, and composition. Many of the methods used could be learned in textbooks, videos and demonstrations. However, the most rewarding methods were inspired by personal experimentation. Every corner turned brought me to new questions about my creative process and my inner artist.

In pottery, my styles and methods of production were in constant flux. There has been a continual need to explore variations—in my creative path—and to invent new pottery tools and procedures, which included Raku, pit firing and stoneware. My techniques and firing methods changed often in order to continue my exploration. Pottery was my primary focus for over 20 years. My current studio still has the tools of all these clay explorations, and I continue to teach and explore pottery at Mastick Senior Center in Alameda.



In 2002, I joined a private group of women that were working with Janet Lipkin, an experienced printmaker at a Berkeley community center. Once again, there was inspiration to explore many techniques and styles, including learning the basics of oil inks and use of an etching press. We explored subtractive methods, additive methods, modified etching, collagraph, linocut and more. The instructor encouraged us to bring in image ideas from other art mediums.

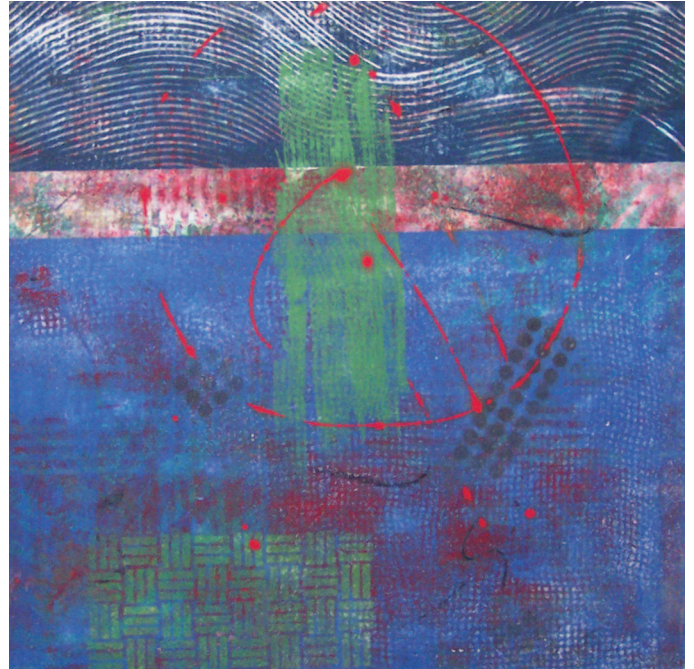
At the time there were no textbooks on clay monotype or clay printing. Online, I researched Mitch Lyons, the inventor of this process. He had produced an instructional video about the production of clay printing that I purchased. I found an artist who taught the process in her home in California, Martha Castillo, who later became a member of CSP. We began frequent communication by email. While I mostly learned by experimentation, I also took a workshop from Martha. Also, in 2013, I took a week long class from Mitch Lyons, held in Taos, New Mexico. In 2015, Mitch published his book, *The Art of Printing with Clay*. When I do public demonstrations, my understanding and passion for clay printing only increases. Although mostly self taught, I find there is still a need for input from others while creating my own artistic personal voice.

Many of the tools needed for clay printing were already in my pottery studio. I altered a tabletop to use as my printing press. One inch strips of wood were secured on the edges of a three by four foot table and then stoneware clay filled this shallow container. The clay was leveled and left uncovered until leather hard. A rolling pin became the other half of the printing press.

Clay print inks are made from mixing raw white china clay, called kaolin, with pigments and water. The kaolin is spooned on top of the water and left to absorb moisture before mixing. Inorganic glaze chemicals, such as cadmium sulfide and iron oxide, are used to color the kaolin slip. I also produced other inks by purchasing organic painter's pigments, made from plants and animals, and mixed them with the raw kaolin slip. I found that some chemicals are easier to mix and use due to their molecular weight and density, allowing them to stay suspended in water. Inorganic pigments are more archival than organic pigments.

To create the image, the kaolin liquefied slip is applied to the leather hard slab with a brush. This provides a white background on the stoneware clay, like gesso used in oil painting. After the slip becomes leather hard, it is time to begin applying images, layer by layer, on the slab with colored slips in a variety of techniques. Some of the techniques are: direct painting, painting on newsprint and transferring to the slab, dabbing, squeezing from a syringe, and drying balls of slip to make a pastels that are grated over the image. This type of printmaking provides endless experimentation. Each layer of slip is misted with water, covered with newsprint and rolled upon with a pony roller creating a level, planographic surface. A pony roller, often used in ceramics, has a short roller on each end which provides the firm pressure needed to transfer a clay print. The non-woven fabric is then placed on the image for printing. After rolling many times and misting sparingly, the fabric is partially lifted keeping the image in registration while checking if the print is complete. Ghost images may be created by the transferred remnants of a





previous print on the slab. It can take over 50-100 rollings to get a quality clay print. Intuition and experience tell the artist when the image is complete.

Although some papers, such as rice paper may be used, a man made, non-woven fabric has proven to work best. Pellon and an industrial fabric called Reemay have the wet strength needed because they are less absorbent and have the long fibers which easily allow the kaolin inks to adhere and become one with these fabric substrates. They also help to create more intensity in the pigments. The fused fabrics provide an electromagnetic surface with a static charge, which traps the clay slip. Also, Pellon and Reemay do not stretch like paper, so edges of images remain crisp.

The area to be printed is created by framing the image with wide paper-tape, after the kaolin images become leather hard. The surface is then misted with water, covered with newsprint and rolled with the rolling pin, until there is a level surface. The non-woven fabric is then placed over the slab, is rolled again and misted as needed, keeping the image in registration, until the image is transferred. This can be a long repetitive process in order to produce the desired intensity. The finished clay print is lifted carefully from the clay press and hung to dry. Later, it is sealed and framed. Prints can also be mounted on a wooden cradle, instead of framing, and sealed for protection. Clay printing is an evolving process, where the artist learns from previous slip applications and finished prints.

The clay printing process is a valuable tool for my expression. While some viewers claim to not like



abstraction, they are often positively attracted to clay monotypes. My favorite pieces are produced when my conscious mind is out of the way. Teaching this philosophy to others has been my challenge, as we are told at a young age to draw an image as it is seen. Which is more creative, abstraction or representational art? Is abstraction a unique style or is all artwork an abstraction?





My early clay printing images were often overworked and confusing. As my process evolved, so has my comfort in the “wabi sabi” of spontaneous imperfections. Images continue to change while being worked and asymmetrical imagery has become ingrained in the evolution of my process. Clay printing, an uncommon form of expression in the printmaking world, adds to my intrigue and desire to produce these types of prints. In addition, every corner turned has led me to more questions about the process and my creative journey.

When I feel blocked in my ability to express myself with artwork, time away is as important as the time creating. Taking time to be at peace with my social and political connections enables me to have time for freedom of expression. I reach out in the world through leadership and teaching, as well as being a mother and friend. There is value in making time to connect with others and value in time to process alone. I am most creative when I am alone in my studio, however, the California Society of Printmakers and my other art groups, help promote my personal balance.

### Artist Information

My abstractions come from viewing the world intimately, as if looking through a magnifying glass. Clay monotype is an abstract, painterly form of printmaking that uses liquid kaolin clay slip, as the ink, and prints overlapping layers that offer an element of surprise. I live in Alameda, California.

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[bonnieclayart.com](http://bonnieclayart.com)

[alamedawomenartists.org](http://alamedawomenartists.org)

[islandallianceofthearts.org/](http://islandallianceofthearts.org/)

[caprintmakers.org/members/](http://caprintmakers.org/members/)

[acga.net](http://acga.net)

### Image Documentation

Bonnie Boller checking before printing, photo by P. Edith

White washing with Kaolin slip for next print

Dusting dry kaolin over stencil, photo by P. Edith

*Bursting*, 2005, clay monotype, 12" x 12"

*Stratum*, 2012, clay monotype, 24" x 24"

*Through The Eye*, 2013, clay monotype, 16" x 16"

*Evolving*, 2005, clay monotype, 20" x 16"

*In the Clouds*, 2013, clay monotype, 16" x 12"

*New Life*, 2005, clay monotype, 16" x 20"





### AQUATINT PHOTO-ETCHING WITH ACRYLIC FLOOR FINISH

By Mike McGovern

Mike McGovern is a well liked teacher in beginning printmaking, who works at both Portland State University and Portland Community College. He feels that teaching always influences his work, helping him to better understand his own work. Mike and his wife have worked on a number of community art projects, including the *Children's Healing Art Project* in Portland, working with children and their families in medical crisis. Mike's own work focuses on his autobiographical past, including both the environment and people.

The novel process described in this article was presented as a demo at the Southern Graphic Council in Portland, 2016.

#### Supplies you will need to get started

- Homemade cardboard aquatint spray box to coat your plate with aquatint spray (cardboard box should not be taller than two feet in height)
- Prepped copper plate—beveled, rounded corners, degreased, contact paper on the back
- Acrylic floor finish mixture in a misting bottle: mixture should be 50% floor finish 50% water. (I suggest Pledge Floor Care—formerly known as Future Floor Wax)
- Transparencies of your negative photographic image
- A screen (200–380 mesh) to burn your image and to screen print your image on your plate

- TW Graphics WB 5025 Flat Black screen printing ink
- Ferric Chloride to etch plate
- Denatured alcohol to take off TW Graphics screen printing ink from plate
- LA Totally Awesome cleaner or ammonia to take off floor finish from plate after plate has been etched

#### Step by Step

1. First choose your photographic image. I usually choose an image that has a lot of contrast. I personally import the image into Photoshop and add a halftone pattern into the image (the halftone pattern is not necessary, just a personal preference). If the image has a lot of grey tones the halftone pattern can help the grey tones show up better in your image. You can find the halftone filter under filters under sketch. I will then boost the contrast of the image and then invert the image to make it a negative image. To invert the image go to image go to adjustments go to invert
2. Print out a transparency of the image. I sometimes make two transparencies depending on the opaqueness of the blacks in the transparency; then I double them up to create more opacity to burn onto a screen.
3. Burn the negative image onto the screen.
4. Once the negative image is now burned onto your screen it is ready to be printed onto your copper plate that has been coated with the aquatint mixture.
5. Have your copper plate cleaned and degreased really well. I degrease my plates with Brasso and denatured alcohol. I sometimes also use steel wool to clean the



plate if there is a lot of oxidization on the plate. Make sure your plate is beveled and has rounded corners so you don't have any sharp edges that can cut through the screen when screening onto the plate. Make sure it has contact paper on the backside as well.

6. Have a cardboard aquatint box made to spray the aquatint mixture to coat your clean degreased plate.
7. Once the plate is clean now you are ready to put the aquatint spray on your plate.
8. In the aquatint box mist about two–three pumps of spray into the box then slide your plate in the box to let the mist settle on your plate for a few seconds. Repeat this process about 10 times while rotating the plate each time as it goes into the box.
9. Don't leave the plate in the box when spraying the mist. Spray the mist first then slide the plate into the box. If you leave the plate in the box when you are spraying chances are you are going to get the bigger droplets of aquatint on the plate, creating large white dots in your aquatint.
10. Once you have put your aquatint coat on your plate let the plate dry for 10–15 minutes.
11. Once the aquatint is dry on the plate it is ready to have the negative image screened on the plate.
12. Screen-print your negative image onto your plate with TW Graphics screen-print ink. Be sure to back flood your screen. This ink is strong and will stain the mesh. It acts as a resist to the ferric chloride acid bath. Where the TW Graphics screen-print ink is coated onto your

copper plate the ink will resist the acid. The open areas of the image where the plate is exposed with the aquatint will etch. So once the plate is etched you will have the positive image etched into the plate.

13. After you screen-printed the negative image onto the copper plate let the TW Graphics screen print ink dry for 15–20 minutes before etching it in your ferric chloride solution. Do not heat the plate to make the TW Graphics ink dry quicker with the aquatint on the plate. If you heat up your plate you run the risk of melting the aquatint and ruining your plate.
14. Etch in ferric chloride for about 25–40 minutes depending on how strong or weak your ferric chloride mixture is. I cut my ferric one-part-ferric to one-part-water and etch for about twenty five minutes.
15. Once the plate is etched it is time to remove the TW Graphics screen-print ink and the aquatint solution. Denatured alcohol will remove the TW Graphics screen print ink. To remove the aquatint solution you can use LA Totally Awesome cleaner or ammonia to remove the wax. I choose to use the LA Totally Awesome cleaner; it's less stinky and seems to be a bit greener than ammonia.
16. Once the plate is completely clean it is now ready to be inked and printed.





## Artist Information

My work is about constructing autobiographical images that explore the ghosts and spirits of my past. I compose memorials to the fleeting and intangible memories of my life. By visually recording impressions of specific times, places, and events in my life I am preserving memories that seem to fade with each passing year.

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## Image Documentation

*Valentines*, 2005, photo-etching, 7.5" x 11" bleed image

*Owl Skull*, 2011, photo-etching, 7.5" x 11" bleed image

*Ripples*, 2016, photo-etching, 6" x 8"

McGovern cardboard aquatint spray box photo by AV Pike

TW Grpahics WB 5025 Flat Black screen printing ink

Mike McGovern during demo at SGCI Portland, 2016, applying screen printing ink to degreased copper plate, photo by AV Pike

Mike McGovern during demo at SGCI Portland, 2016, showing copper plate using screen printing and aquatint process, photo by AV Pike

## NEW MEMBERS

### Portfolio Review Summer 2016

Kathryn Cirincione  
Cynthia Davis  
Melissa Holden  
Ellie Honl  
Bryan Kring  
Miwako Nishizawa  
Patricia Post  
Sheryl Seltzer  
Hannah Skoonberg  
Melissa West  
Donna Westerman

### Portfolio Review Fall 2016

Begitte L Andersen  
Zach Clark  
Ana Fernandez  
J. Ruth Gendler  
Alisa Golden  
Ashley Rodriguez Reed  
Julia E. Rigby  
Elizabeth C. Rose  
Georgia A. Sears  
Emil Wilson



[www.caprintmakers.org](http://www.caprintmakers.org)

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